

Northeast Conference

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Sacred Heart Picked As 2010 Northeast Conference Women's Lacrosse Favorite *Pioneers Looking to Make It Three Consecutive NEC Titles*

Somerset, NJ -- Two-time defending champion Sacred Heart was selected as the 2010 Northeast Conference (NEC) Women's Lacrosse preseason favorite in a vote conducted by the league head coaches. The Pioneers received five first place votes, slipping ahead of Monmouth, which earned three first place votes. Quinnipiac, the 2009 NEC runner-up, tallied two first place votes and was picked third, while Robert Morris was slotted fourth. Mount St. Mary's and Wagner were selected in fifth and sixth place, respectively. Long Island, Bryant, Central Connecticut State and Saint Francis (PA) rounded out the field.

Sacred Heart (12-7, 7-1 NEC) is coming off its second straight NEC title and returns All-NEC first team goalkeeper **Chelsea Wagner (Aurora, CO/Smoky Hill)**. Wagner ranked second in the league last season in both goals-against-average (8.81 gaa) and save percentage (.541) while earning 12 victories. Eleventh year head coach Laura Cook also returns three All-NEC second teamers looking to lead the Pioneers back the NCAA Tournament. Attacker **Carissa Hauser (East Northport, NY/Commack)** returns for her senior season after ranking second in the conference in points (72) and third in assists (31) a year ago. She also tied for the league lead with three game-winning goals. Senior **Jackie Pierce (Cortlandt Manor, NY/Walter Panas (Stony Brook))** should once again anchor the back line after ranking third on the team in draws (33) and fourth in ground balls (34). Sophomore **Katie Kmiotek (Farmingville, NY/Sachem East)** finished fourth on the Pioneers with 18 goals in her freshman season.

Monmouth (7-11, 5-3 NEC) begins a new era with veteran head coach Denise Wescott taking over the reigns in West Long Branch after spending the last four years at NEC rival Mount St. Mary's, where she compiled a 22-10 league record. Monmouth will look to a trio of seniors to lead the Hawks to their 13th consecutive NEC Tournament. Senior midfielder and two-time All-NEC first team selection **Megan Brennan (King of Prussia, PA/Archbishop Carroll)** has paced the MU offense in back-to-back seasons. Brennan finished second on the circuit in 2009 with 45 goals and ranked fifth with 59 points. She also finished second on the Hawks in both ground balls (29) and draw controls (31). Brennan has already surpassed the century mark with 112 goals over the course of her career to go along with 150 points. Senior midfielder **Ali Pollock (Watervliet, NY/Shaker)** finished second on the team with 39 points, including 17 goals and a team-high 22 assists (seventh in NEC) to claim all-league second team accolades. All-NEC second team midfielder **Perry DeWitt (Malvern, PA/Great Valley)**, a senior, tallied 14 goals and 17 points last season, and also topped Monmouth with 37 draw controls and 21 caused turnovers.

2010 Northeast Conference Women's Lacrosse Preseason Coaches Poll

1. Sacred Heart (5)
2. Monmouth (3)
3. Quinnipiac (2)
4. Robert Morris
5. Mount St. Mary's
6. Wagner
7. Long Island
8. Bryant
9. Central Connecticut St.
10. Saint Francis (PA)

First place votes in parentheses

(2010 Northeast Conference Women's Lacrosse Preseason Poll Release; 1-of-3)

Bryant University (2012-13) • Central Connecticut State University • Fairleigh Dickinson University
Long Island University • Monmouth University • Mount St. Mary's University • Quinnipiac University
Robert Morris University • Sacred Heart University • St. Francis (NY) College
Saint Francis (PA) University • Wagner College

Quinnipiac (13-3, 7-1 NEC) returns 18 players from last year's squad, which captured a share of the program's second consecutive regular season crown. The Bobcats established school records in 2009 in both wins (13) and winning percentage (.813). Graduate student and team captain **Katie Latonick (Severna Park, MD/Archbishop Spalding)** set a single-season school record and ranked second in the league with 44 assists last season, and also finished seventh in the conference with 54 points. She would go on to earn NEC All-Tournament recognition after recording nine points in two postseason games. Fifth year head coach Danie Caro brings back the reigning NEC Rookie of the Year in sophomore midfielder **Marissa Caroleo (N. Babylon, NY/North Babylon)**. Caroleo finished fourth on the team with 20 goals and 19 draw controls, and also racked up 22 ground balls, good for fifth on the club.

Robert Morris (9-8, 5-3 NEC) continued to improve last season, finishing 5-3 in league play and narrowly missing an NEC Tournament berth. Sixth year head coach Katy Phillips started the program from scratch in 2005 and the groundwork has been set for the Colonials to make a splash in 2009. The Colonials return 14 letterwinners, including super sophomore **Courtney Sicinski (Downingtown, PA/Downingtown West)** and senior goalkeeper **Erica Webb (Arnold, MD/Broadneck)**. Sicinski earned three NEC Rookie of the Week awards last season and posted 48 points on 27 goals and 21 helpers (fifth in NEC in assists per outing) for a Robert Morris squad that ranked second in the conference in goals per game. Webb started every game in net a year ago and was the fourth-ranked NEC keeper in goals against average (10.95) and save percentage (.508). Junior defender **Karly O'Brien (Rockville, MD/Our Lady of Good Counsel)** led the team with 40 ground balls and 21 caused turnovers. Classmate **Mallory Schulze (Bel Air, MD/C. Milton Wright)** also returns to roam the defense after posting 34 ground balls and 15 caused turnovers in 15 starts.

Mount St. Mary's (6-11, 6-2 NEC), which is coming of its seventh straight NEC Tournament appearance, welcomes first year head coach Sonia LaMonica. LaMonica comes to Emmitsburg after stints as an assistant coach at Denver and most recently, Towson. The Mount returns six starters including two all-conference performers - reigning NEC Defensive Player of the Year **Aly Jost (Abingdon, MD/Bel Air)** and All-NEC second team midfielder **Lucy Pompa (Baltimore, MD/Bryn Mawr School)**. Jost, a junior, led the NEC with 47 ground balls and paced the Mount with 19 caused turnovers. Pompa netted 10 goals and ended her sophomore year second on the team with 31 ground balls and 26 draw controls. Senior attacker **Ashley Johnson (Arvada, CO/Arvada West)** is the Mount's top returning offensive threat after posting 29 goals and five assists in 2009.

Wagner (4-13, 3-5 NEC) will see three of its top five leading scorers from a year ago return to Grymes Hill under second year head coach Cristina Curiale. Sophomore midfielder **Carolyn Clark (Syracuse, NY/Westhill)** is coming off a rookie season in which she led the Seahawks in goals (29) and ranked second in points (35). Senior attacker **Janine Bright (Commack, NY/Commack)** was Wagner's third-leading scorer a year ago with 32 points on 19 goals and 13 assists, despite missing two games with an injury. Sophomore midfielder **Melanie Garces (San Diego, CA/Westview)** finished fifth on the Seahawks with 30 points on 19 goals and 11 assists. Wagner also returns senior goalkeeper **Alex Johnston (Fayetteville, NY/Fayetteville-Manlius)** who after posting 175 saves a year ago, ranks second on the Seahawks' career saves list with 462.

Long Island (4-13, 2-6 NEC) welcomes back five of its top six scorers for second year head coach Heather Levins, who will attempt to direct the Blackbirds to their first-ever NEC Tournament berth. Senior attacker **Christie Wienckowski (Newton Square, PA/Marple Newton)** paced LIU with 50 points (33 goals, 17 assists) in 2009, and ranked third in the NEC with 57 draw controls. She will be joined up front by junior **Annie Kalata (Nesconset, NY/Smithtown East)**, who led LIU and finished ninth on the circuit with 38 goals. Anchoring the midfield are senior **Jillian Maricondo (Levittown, NY/MacArthur)** and junior **Sara LaNoir (Queensbury, NY/Glens Falls)**, who combined for more than 20 points, 60 ground balls, 35 caused turnovers and almost 50 draws last season. A pair of sophomore goalkeepers **Amber Meek (Woodbridge, VA/Osourn)** and **Jaqueline Simonian (Farmingdale, NY/Plainedge)** return after compiling more than 400 minutes in goal apiece.

Bryant (3-13) returns 70 percent of its offensive production from 2009, including three of its top four goal scorers. Second year head coach Karen Healy will look to senior midfielder **Allison Faiola (Billerica, MA/Billerica Memorial)** to jump start the offense. Faiola posted 49 points, including 33 goals, and was 8-10 on free position opportunities a year ago. Sophomore midfielder **Mary Green (Merrick, NY/Calhoun)** totaled 38 points on 29 goals and nine assists and led the Bulldogs with 31 draw controls. Sophomore attacker **Lauren Sheridan (Bethpage, NY/Bethpage)** compiled 18 goals and 23 points, while senior midfielder **Eliza DeMarseilles (Branford, CT/Branford)** collected 12 goals, 10 assists, and 21 ground balls. Senior **Jessica Bolton (Belgrade Lakes, ME/Scarborough)** and sophomore **Lauren Filippone (West Babylon, NY/West Babylon)** return after splitting time in goal last season.

Central Connecticut State (1-15, 1-7 NEC) and fifth year head coach Rachel Tringali have nine starters returning, including nine of its top 10 point producers along with draw control specialist **Cara Momnie (South Windsor, CT/South Windsor)**, a junior midfielder. Momnie set a new single-season school record and ranked fourth in the NEC with 55 draw controls in 2009. Her 23 caused turnovers placed her fourth in the league and she also paced the Blue Devils with 22 ground balls. Sophomore attacker **Alexa Smead (Averill, NY/Academy of the Holy Names)** netted 20 goals and five assists, while sophomore attacker **Ashley Perkoski (Newington, CT/Newington)**, senior midfielder **Lyndsey Mastandrea (Bayport, NY/Bayport-Blue Point)**, junior midfielder **Michelle Conway (Wantagh, NY/Wantagh)** and sophomore midfielder **Ashley Mara (West Hartford, CT/Northwest Catholic)** all totaled 17 points.

Saint Francis (PA) (1-12, 0-8 NEC) and head coach Steph Marcon, who is now in her fourth season, sport a roster dominated by underclassmen. Though the Red Flash feature 11 sophomores and nine freshmen, eight starters and better than 70 percent of the team's offense are back in the fold in 2009. Sophomore attacker **Chelsea Kent (Winter Springs, FL/Winter Springs)** and classmate **Kate Simmons (Delran, NJ/Delran)** posted 39 and 32 goals last season, respectively, and combined for 92 points. As a freshman, Kent tied for the NEC lead in goals per game (3.0), ranked second in points per game (4.0) and established single-season school records for points (52), goals and assists (13). Simmons (40 points), who ranked second in the league with 4.15 draw controls per outing, and sophomore **Catherine Helming (Canandaigua, NY/Canandaigua Academy)** should handle draw control duties. Junior goalkeeper **Danielle Pokusa (Cinnaminson, NJ/Cinnaminson)** is back after starting every game last season. She finished second in the conference with 11.08 saves per game.

The 2010 NEC Women's Lacrosse Tournament will take place at the home of the high seed on April 23 and 25. The top four teams in the regular season standings will advance to the postseason event. The winner of the NEC Tournament will receive the league's automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament and travel to the Patriot League champion in a play-in game, the date of which is to be determined.